

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, get this. The Secretary of Agriculture has publicly stated that he is not enthusiastic about increasing spending for nutrition programs above the \$9.5 billion currently being discussed as part of the farm bill conference. I have news for the Secretary. Families going to food banks aren't enthusiastic about their struggles. People applying for food stamps aren't enthusiastic about the tough choices they are forced to make because their food stamp benefit isn't keeping up with the price of milk. Seniors aren't enthusiastic about having to take their medicines on an empty stomach.

The Secretary should get out more into the real world and meet with some of these families. \$9.5 billion is simply not enough, not when families are choosing between food and heat; not when the minimum food stamp benefit is still \$10 a month, unchanged since 1977; not when the price of milk eats more of the food stamp dollar today, than last year, simply because food stamps aren't indexed for inflation.

The farm bill conferees should do the right thing and properly fund the nutrition title. Anything less is shameful.

PARDON BORDER AGENTS

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution gives the President absolute authority to grant a pardon. He has exercised that power 157 times. Last week, he pardoned 15 more people convicted of everything from importation of drugs to bank fraud and other crimes.

But two people not on his pardon list are Border Agents Ramos and Compean, who are serving 11 and 12 years for enforcing the law on the Texas-Mexico border. They were convicted of civil rights violations when they shot a drug smuggler bringing in \$750,000 worth of drugs to the United States.

The United States Government gave the drug dealer complete immunity for his crimes to testify against the agents. Then the Justice Department hid from the jury the fact that the drug dealers smuggled in another load of drugs shortly before the trial. The U.S. Attorney made a backroom deal with the smuggler for his testimony and got the tainted testimony they bartered for.

Last session, this House passed legislation to prevent taxpayer money from being used to incarcerate Ramos and Compean, but they are still in prison. Because of the U.S. Attorney's actions of deception in this trial, and the fact that the agents were just doing their job, are grounds for the President to pardon both of the border agents immediately.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING PFC ANDREW HABSIEGER

(Mr. CARNAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Private First Class Andrew Habsieger, who died serving our country in Iraq. On Easter Sunday, March 23, he was one of four soldiers killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad. He was scheduled to return home to his family in 2 weeks. Andy was just 22 years old.

In Festus, Missouri, friends and family remembered him as a loving child and standout high school football player. Andy proudly served the U.S. Army as an infantryman and was inspired to fight for his country after the terrible attacks of September 11.

On March 22, 2005, Andy wrote me requesting assistance in joining the Marine Corps because of experiencing migraines while growing up. Andy ultimately joined the Army. Looking back on his letter, I am reminded of his steely determination to serve his country. That he did.

The weekend Andy died marked the 4,000th American soldier killed in Iraq. My heart goes out to Andy's parents, Michael and Brenda Habsieger, as well as his brother, Jacob, who is also in the Army. We must never forget our Nation's fallen heroes. PFC Andrew Habsieger will not be forgotten and his service will inspire generations yet to come.

THE COOPER-WOLF SAFE COMMISSION ACT: BIPARTISANSHIP REQUIRED

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last week the annual Medicare trustees report concluded that consideration of reforms to ensure the financial security of Medicare must occur in the near future. The report states, "The sooner the solutions are enacted, the more flexible and gradual they can be." As lawmakers, we are obligated, on economic and moral grounds, to tackle this enormous issue.

Newspaper headlines in the days following the release of the report say as follows, "Should political stalemate end, entitlement solution possible"; "Entitlement reform cannot wait on politics"; "Budget experts left and right urge action on entitlements."

Every day that the Congress doesn't act, nor the administration, we miss an opportunity for our children and our grandchildren to get this country moving. Congressman COOPER and I have a bill called the SAFE Commission. It's a bipartisan bill.

I am also, Mr. Speaker, disappointed that Secretary Paulson has failed to address this issue. He said he feels like

he is playing solitaire. Secretary Paulson, there are 74 cosponsors in the House, 40 Republicans, 34 Democrats that are waiting for you to do something. Secretary Paulson, if you leave this administration with failing to do that, you will regret it.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

REPORT FROM THE FEDERAL RESERVE

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke, was before us at the Joint Economic Committee. Chairman Bernanke noted many negative factors for the current economy, increased unemployment claims, increased food and energy prices, and it has reduced Americans' confidence in the economy.

Recently, we have all seen news reports about the Federal Reserve's unprecedented actions aimed at increasing liquidity, stabilizing credit markets, and protecting a Wall Street investment bank from bankruptcy. Despite these dramatic measures, liquidity remains limited, and with only news reports to go on, the American public seems unsure about whether government is acting in their best interest.

The Federal Reserve needs to start clearly informing the American public about the impact of its actions. This openness would encourage sensible economic policy, bring stability to the markets, and help restore individuals' confidence in the government and in our economy.

Millions of homeowners are struggling to make mortgage payments or have already lost their homes, and they do not feel like their government is helping them. The Federal Reserve needs to clearly communicate better to the American people.

OBAMA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, in a recent speech in my home State of Pennsylvania, one of the candidates for President referred to the possibility of his daughter conceiving a child as a "punishment." In referring to his own two daughters, he said, "I am going to teach them first about values and morals, but if they make a mistake, I don't want them punished with a baby. I

don't want them punished with an STD."

I agree that teens should be taught about values and morals. But I find it disturbing that any candidate for high office finds the notion of a grandchild to be punishment, a punishment on the same level as a sexually transmitted disease. Have we come this far? Has the opposing party embraced an ideology that is so opposed to life that a grandchild is seen as a punishment?

In the same speech he said, "This is an example where good people can disagree." Well, I see nothing good about believing a grandchild is a punishment. Not his most eloquent or uniting speech.

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CONGRATULATING NICKELODEON AND THE WOLFF-DRAPER FAMILY

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, during Read Across America Week, I went to Lincoln Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, and we read our favorite book, "Green Eggs and Ham." I asked the young people if they ever watched C-SPAN, and they looked at me quizzically. Then I asked them if they ever watched Nickelodeon, and they all raised their hand and cheered. I said, "Which show do you watch the most?" They watch "The Naked Brothers Band."

The Naked Brothers Band is a show on Nickelodeon that has been an award winner starring Nat and Alex Wolff, produced by their mother, Polly Draper, and co-produced by their father, Michael Wolff. It is the "Ozzie and Harriet," the Nelson brothers of the 21st century, and it shows that there is good television that gives kids good values and teaches them about the environment and how to be good young people and grow up to be great Americans.

So my congratulations to the Nickelodeon Network and to the Wolff-Draper family and Nat and Alex.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4847, UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1071 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1071

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4847) to reauthorize the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All

points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science and Technology. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Science and Technology now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 4847 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SUTTON. For the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Ms. SUTTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 1071 provides for consideration of H.R. 4847, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008 under a structured rule. The rule provides 1 hour of de-

bate, controlled by the Committee on Science and Technology, and makes in order all three amendments that were submitted for consideration. I am proud to rise today in support of this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, twenty-seven years ago, in 1971, over 12,000 citizens and more than 250 firefighters tragically lost their lives due to fires. In response to those tragic occurrences, this body passed the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act into law, establishing the United States Fire Administration, also known as the USFA, and the National Fire Academy, known as the NFA. The USFA was created to reduce the incidence of death, injury and property loss from fire through public education, data collection, research and training.

Mr. Speaker, we have made great progress. Since the creation of the USFA in 1974, the number of fire deaths has been reduced by more than one-half. Besides providing training and educational programs for over 30,000 fire departments across this great Nation, the USFA promotes fire safety and prevention programs to the public.

Mr. Speaker, these educational and outreach programs undoubtedly have saved thousands of lives and thousands of dollars, and will continue to do so.

Reports published by the USFA provide essential information to help reduce the risk of fires. For example, the USFA releases a report in December to encourage fire safety during the holiday season. According to last year's report, "Fires occurring during the holiday season claimed the lives of over 400 people, injured more than 1,650, and caused \$990 million in damage." The report outlines precautionary tests to help American families avoid devastating but often preventable accidents.

The USFA also collects reliable data on civilian and firefighter deaths and injuries. In 2006, there were 3,245 civilian deaths from fires and 81 percent of all civilian fire deaths occurred in residences, which represents 25 percent of all fires. Direct property loss due to fires was approximately \$11.3 billion, \$755 million of which was the result of 31,000 intentionally-set structure fires.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, 106 firefighters were killed in the line of duty in 2006. For nearly 30 years, the USFA has collected data on the number and causes of firefighter fatalities. The analysis of this invaluable research allows the USFA to find solutions to specific problems and reduce the number of fatalities with our firefighters.

While the number of firefighter deaths has been greatly reduced, approximately 100 brave firefighters make the ultimate sacrifice to protect our loved ones and our communities each year. We must continue to strive to prevent fires, to learn the lessons from unpreventable fires, and to properly train and equip our firefighters. It is vital that our Federal Government ensure that our brave firefighters have